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OUR FAILURE IN GERMANY

By William Henry Chamberlin

In diplomatic struggle, as in military warfare, there are primary and secondary fronts. President Truman's proposal to extend what amounts to peacetime lend-lease aid to Greece and Turkey has aroused nation-wide and world-wide excitement. But these economically undeveloped Balkan countries do not represent the truly decisive area of the American-Soviet duel. That area, in Europe, is Germany.

In the same way, and for the same reasons, Japan, not Korea, is the important arena of struggle in the Far East, even though it is in Korea that American and Soviet troops are in direct contact and an appeal for aid to Korea is likely to follow Congressional action on the Greco-Turkish question. The Soviet Government could easily resign itself to a temporary check at the Dardanelles if it could anticipate the absorption of the whole of Germany into its sphere of influence.

Such an absorption might be expected to produce the same consequences that would probably have occurred if Hitler had achieved a knock-out victory over Russia. A mighty totalitarian empire would stretch from the Pacific to the Rhine. This empire would be so large in population, so vast in resources, so deep in terms of space and distance that it would be largely impervious to sea power. It would be a tremendous base, such as no conqueror ever possessed in the past, for the domination of what the late famous British geographer, Sir Halford Mackinder, called the World-Island -- the continents of Europe, Asia and Africa. In his neglected masterpiece, Democratic Ideals and Reality, published after the end of World War I, Sir Halford sounded this amazingly timely note of prophetic warning:

> "Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland. Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island. Who rules the World-Island commands the World."

Mackinder's thinking was too sharp and pessimistic to attract much attention in America in the mood of shallow optimism that prevailed after the end of World War I. But the astute masters of the Kremlin today are, in all probability, not indifferent to a line of thinking that works out so clearly to their strategic advantage.

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In view of the tremendous political and strategic importance of Germany for the purpose of blocking the realization of a totalitarian Eurasian empire it is discouraging to report that our occupation of Germany, up to the present time, has been a failure politically, economically and morally. Yet such is the case.

Our only consolation is that the Russians, as a result of inability or unwillingness to control their troops in the first months of the occupation and thirst for immediate loot, have failed even more signally. But we have little reason for positive satisfaction with anything that has happened in the Western zones of Germany under the occupation. The failure has not been irreparable; but it has been serious. If the Administration is serious in its announced policy of containing the spread of aggressive Communism the main elements in the democratic failure in Germany should be frankly recognized and promptly corrected.

II

One of the strongest impressions I carried away from a visit to Germany last summer was the pessimism, sometimes approaching despair, of anti-Nazis of the most unimpeachable records. Men and women with long years in concentration camps and political exile behind them found the task of political reconstruction, difficult at best, made almost impossible by blunders of occupation policy.

The most conspicuous of these blunders has been in the so-called de-Nazification, which has actually worked out, in practice, as a kind of re-Nazification. The fault here is not, as is often charged by the Kremlin radio and by Kremlin mouthpieces in this country, that there has been too much lenience with Nazis. At the time of my visit in Germany there were about seventy-five thousand Nazi political prisoners in the American zone, about fifty-thousand in the British zone. No doubt there were cases of injustice, false arrest and mistaken identity.

But by and large the political leadership of the Nazi organization, the Gauleiters, the big and little bosses, had been rounded up. The trouble with de-Nazification in the American zone has been the sweeping, bureaucratic, indiscriminate proscription of enormous numbers of people who were not implicated in the crimes and oppression of the Third Reich; who could be charged, in many cases, only with a want of moral courage. A very high proportion of men engaged in professional work -- industrial managers, engineers, teachers, doctors, writers, musicians -- have been excluded from their professions because of semi-compulsory membership in Nazi organizations.

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De-Nazification has greatly lowered the level of competence in administration and the professions. When one adds the silly master-race affectations of the Military Government administration, the discouragement of social and intellectual contacts between Americans and Western-minded Germans, the needling interference with freedom of press, radio, university teaching and book publication, the pattern of political failure, measured by democratic standards, is complete. No wonder it has become a saying in Germany: "God give us a Fifth Reich, for the Fourth is all too like the Third."

III

The economic failure is perhaps the most fundamental of all. It is as useless to talk about democracy to people who are half or three quarters starved as it is to talk about music to the deaf, or scenic beauty to the blind. Col. Frank L. Howley, American director of the civil administration of Berlin, gave the following accurate description of the state of the former capital in February, 1947:

> "Three and a quarter million persons continue to be economic paupers, dependent upon the rest of the world for their existence. Berlin is still a city without raw materials, without freedom of commerce and short of machines. The people of the city are unable to give anything in return for the food, clothing and consumer goods sent to them from the German zones or the homelands of the Allies."

What Col. Howley said about Berlin would apply pretty substantially to the whole of Germany. A situation that is equally cruel and senseless has grown up as a consequence of the Morgenthau Plan psychology and the Potsdam and Level of Industry Agreements. German industry and foreign trade have been paralyzed, in a world that is crying for equipment and manufactured goods to replace the ravages of war. The considerable part of the German city population that depended on industry, shipping and foreign trade for a livelihood has been completely pauperized and can only be kept alive by American and British food shipments.

The cost of blind hate and vengeance is very high. Herbert Hoover, after his recent trip to Germany, estimates that approximately 950 million dollars must be spent by America and Great Britain before the middle of 1948 merely to keep alive on an inadequate 1,800 daily calory ration the forty odd million people in the American and British zones.

In a later report Mr. Hoover drove home with vivid and convincing logic the point that if German nonmilitary industry were permitted to recover, free from strangulating controls, this burden on the American taxpayers could be reduced and ultimately dispensed with. At the same time the recovery of Europe, a most essential condition for the peaceful containing of Communism, would be greatly advanced.

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IV

Our greatest failure in Germany up to the present time has been the moral failure. Making all due allowance for some well meant and reasonably successful attempts to promote athletic sports among the German youth and for other goodwill ventures, the fact remains that by and large we have not shown the Germans any very impressive or convincing example of democratic civilization.

The Germans have seen too much of our bad sides, too little of our good sides. There has been far too much looting, drunkenness, immorality and general carpet-bagging hell-raising in our occupation.

On the other hand, one of the most hopeful methods of combatting the legacy of Hitlerism and promoting German democracy has been strangely neglected. It has been occupation policy to obstruct rather than to encourage contacts between anti-Nazi Germans and American public opinion. Pastor Martin Niemoeller and his wife were the first Germans who were allowed to come to this country as free visitors, eighteen months after the end of the war. While the Soviet zone is flooded with Communist propaganda, Western-minded Germans find it most difficult to obtain representative American and British books and magazines.

Germans can scarcely fail to be struck by the gulf between the words and the deeds of the occupying Powers. The discrepancy between the principles of the Atlantic Charter and the actual political and economic treatment meted out to Germany is glaring. Germans read in their papers that the United Nations has decided to outlaw genocide as an international crime. They read, perhaps in the same paper, that in Berlin in 1946 there were 105,548 registered deaths and 24,000 registered births. And they wonder when and how the admirable principle of outlawing genocide will be applied.

For the United States and Great Britain to withdraw unilaterally from Germany, leaving the country wide open to Soviet conquest and penetration would be to justify the pessimistic remark of a witty British journalist whom I met in Paris last summer: "Hitler has won this war, in the person of Stalin." But there must be a drastic change in overall political and economic policies if the Anglo-American occupation of the more populous part of Germany is to promote a democratic sequel to Hitlerism, and to serve the cause of stable peace and European recovery.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events VOL. IV, NO. 16

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By Frank C. Hanighen April 16, 1947

It is a little difficult to take seriously proposals for imprisoning the Muddled Milkman from Iowa. For one thing, the exhumation of the 150-year old Logan Act -- which prescribes prosecution for those who act abroad to oppose American policy -- bears too visibly the earmarks of smart Republican politics. The GOP is quite entitled to bludgeon Truman with the appeal to read Henry A. Wallace out of the Democratic Party; that is a part of the grand old game. But one can hear all too audibly the Union League Clubs' approval: "well played."

Granted that the spectacle of an American citizen conducting himself as has Henry Wallace is disgraceful. Yet to invoke the Logan Act seems to place the matter on too serious a plane. One has the feeling that in the midst of such proceedings as a solemn request for an indictment, Henry, say in Paris, would put on his track clothes and go for a sprint down the Champs Elysees. (In just such a garb and fashion did he entertain the startled inhabitants of Lima, Peru, three years ago.) Even MM. Thorez and Duclos might have to revise their plans for exploiting such a great world figure; for the French, like the Peruvians, have a sense of humor.

There might well be some real danger in prosecuting the former Vice-President. Wallace is a man with a strong flair for martyrdom. His following includes many of the lunatic margin of the Left movement. If perchance he were prosecuted at a time when some of his ideas touched a genuinely responsive chord among large sections of the people, a real public leader and movement might accidentally be born.

The best way to deal with the Wallace myth is to debunk it thoroughly. Dwight McDonald has done this supremely well in his article this month in Politics (part of which is quoted on the back page of this supplement). It makes heartbreaking reading for those who expect a high standard of intelligence and character in the leaders of the nation. For them, the formula of Figaro is indicated -- laugh in order to keep from crying.

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Our colleague, Felix Morley, left three weeks ago for a trip to England, France and Switzerland. From the latter country, date April 7, he writes us his impressions, as follows: "At the Mt. Pelerin Conference here and in Geneva, I have met some very interesting and well-informed Italians, Germans, Belgians, Scandinavians and British. They have differences in viewpoint, but there is a general consensus of opinion. This is that the general economic picture is still deteriorating everywhere; that currency problems and political discontent are mounting simultaneously and that very serious trouble, such as desperate food riots and essentially meaningless civil strife, are to be expected next winter unless this summer shows a definite turn for the better. Spring is coming, just in time, to a stricken Continent where even the stolid and dogged English have been tried almost to the limit of human endurance. Meantime the Communists press on everywhere with their propaganda and organizing work.

"Two discoveries here surprise me: the strength of Communism in the Midi and other French rural sections where, in La Terre, they have easily the best agricultural paper; and the growth of the movement in the industrialized parts of Switzerland. In Basel, for instance, the party dominates the Socialists and together they hold 64 out of 130 seats in the Cantonal Government. The next election of Federal Councillors (House of Representatives) comes in October and the Marxist parties are working hard to achieve a dominance in the Swiss Government which would have seemed

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unbelievable before the war. As you know, the Swiss Presidents hold office for one year, selected in rotation from the Cabinet. So the local Communists figure if they can get out a vote enabling them to a couple of Cabinet seats they will in time have a Communist Swiss President. The office is not very important but the prestige would be and the thinking illustrates the long-range character of Communist strategy and tactics."

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Here and There ----- British sources are increasingly inclined to believe that a Cabinet shift is in the cards: Bevin retiring from Foreign Affairs to take the Economic Ministry; Dalton deserting the Treasury to become Foreign Secretary; and Cripps taking Dalton's place at the head of the Exchequer. With Dalton as Foreign Secretary, British policy would be more likely to soften than to stiffen, it is believed; and there is doubt that Bevin could duplicate his great accomplishments of the war production days.

---- Former Assistant Secretary of War (for Air) Robert A. Lovett is being mentioned as a possible successor to Dean Acheson, if the latter resigns as Undersecretary of State. Rumors persist that Mr. Acheson would like to retire and resume the practice of law. Lovett is said to have been a very close friend of Marshall in the War Department. He is conservative in politics and would presumably work more harmoniously with the General Staff than has Mr. Acheson.

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The results of the prefectural elections in Japan last week surprised many observers by reason of the striking defeat of the Left. For some months, considerable gains by the Socialist and Communist parties had been expected, because of the bad economic conditions and the ferment among labor unions. Instead, the Right won easily. This outcome is provisionally interpreted not as strength for the Rightist parties, but as the result of a sort of political numbness of the masses after the long war, defeat and occupation. Further elections may provide a better index.

The emergence of a new spirit in Japan, which is not hospitable to the materialistic philosophy of the Marxist parties, may have been a factor in the defeat of the Left. Many Americans returning from Japan have brought news of a great spiritual revival which they say is sweeping the country. Many thousands are being converted to Christianity. Kagawa, the heroic Christian leader, is said to be converting about 5,000 a month. These facts may well have prompted General MacArthur several months ago to send a message to the Southern Baptist Convention in the United States, saying that he wanted a thousand Christian missionaries in Japan at the earliest possible time.

Another tendency akin to the religious revival is seen in a new orientation of intellectual interests. Book publishers are issuing numerous reprints of works by Western authors. Shakespeare, Goethe and Walt Whitman are the favorites and are sold widely.

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The President appealed to industry to cut prices, in order to reduce living costs and prevent a recession. But he failed to exhort the farming community to follow suit. Mr. Truman apparently ignored the fact that food prices are the major cause of the present high cost of living. According to the New York Times (April 14), 70 per cent of the rise in the cost of living during 1946 was accounted for by food items and 13.5 per cent by clothing. In other words, non-food and non-clothing industry can be credited with only about one-sixth of the rise in consumer prices. Food prices, it is estimated, have risen 145 per cent since 1939, or about double the percentage advance of manufactured products. Swollen food costs, in

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turn, make manufactured goods dearer: as grocery bills rise, so do wages and increased labor costs are passed on to lift the prices of industrial products. In short, even if manufacturers respond 100 per cent to the President's appeal, they cannot radically affect the average price level, unless something is done about food.

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The press seems to have awarded Secretary Krug a victory, on points, in his combat with John L. Lewis about responsibility for maintaining security regulations in the mines. But, under cover of the affray, Mr. Lewis seems to have stolen a march on the Government in another matter. Newspapers last week ran the official announcement -- but missed the significance -- of the appointment of Mr. Thomas E. Murray, New York business man, to be the third trustee, representing the public, on the miners' Welfare and Retirement Fund Committee. Captain Collisson represents the Government, Mr. Lewis the miners. On the surface, it looks as if Mr. Lewis is in a lonely minority of one; actually the situation is otherwise.

Mr. Murray is known to have enjoyed cordial relations with Mr. Lewis in negotiations for a transport workers agreement in New York ten years ago when Mr. Lewis headed the CIO. Mr. Murray was then Receiver for the Interborough Rapid Transit Company. Mr. Lewis later sought, unsuccessfully, to persuade President Roosevelt to give Mr. Murray a position in the Government. Mr. Murray is a very prominent Catholic layman, is reputed to be very wealthy and is an uncle of Mrs. Henry Ford II. Friendly relations between Mr. Lewis and Mr. Murray have continued since their first meeting. The latter's name was one of 11 on a list of persons recommended by Mr. Lewis for the trustee position, in a letter to Captain Collisson. In short, the UMW chief has ensured that this trustee committee will not exactly be packed against him.

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HUMAN EVENTS was the first publication in America to break the story of the German Underground, in two articles: The Epic of the German Underground, by Alexander Maley, on February 27, 1946; and Resistance in the German Foreign Office, by E. A. Bayne, on April 3, 1946. This week has seen the publication of the first comprehensive American book on this subject, Germany's Underground by Allen Welsh Dulles (Macmillan, $3.00). Mr. Dulles, lawyer, writer, diplomat, joined the OSS after Pearl Harbor, worked in Switzerland from 1942 to VE Day 1945, then entered Germany as head of the OSS mission. He was in constant touch with the German Underground in Switzerland from 1942 on, and sent many reports on the subject to Washington. His book confirms all the major charges made in the two HUMAN EVENTS articles.

Among these was the statement -- greeted with surprise by many readers -- that dissident German generals who wished to overthrow Hitler were ready to start a coup d'etat when word of Neville Chamberlain's 1938 visit to Munich stopped them. From then on, Dulles says, one plot after another was prepared, but all fell through, including the climactic putsch of July 20, 1944. Practically, the whole General Staff, with the exception of Keitel, was involved.

Mr. Dulles intimates that two factors -- "unconditional surrender" and the widespread civilian bombing by the Western Allies -- were handicaps in that they delayed decision of the Underground to come out in open revolt. The Western policy stood in contrast with the realistic Soviet policy of propagandizing for the Free Germany Committee and making a distinction between the German people and the "Hitlerite" Government. Says Mr. Dulles: "Both Washington and London were fully advised beforehand on all the conspirators were attempting to do, but sometimes it seemed that those who determined policy in America and England were making the military task as difficult as possible by uniting all Germans to resist to the bitter end." Why Washington and London discouraged the plotters against Hitler and thereby prolonged the war is a story which has yet to be told.

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Notes and Quotes

British Papers Please Copy. "How has the Wallace myth survived so long? What qualities of his have made him so prominent a leader of the liberal-labor movement? The answers are to be found in the realm of language. Wallace has made a career by supplying to the liblabs a commodity they crave: rhetoric which accomplishes in fantasy what cannot be accomplished in reality. His relation to them is comparable to that of Hitler to the German middle classes: a demagogue whose rhetoric to an outside observer appears to be stylistically atrocious and intellectually puerile, but which strikes through to certain deep, confused mass emotions. Fortunately, the liblabs are not so large or significant a class as the middle classes, and Wallace apparently lacks charisma (or political sex-appeal) for a wider American audience. As Roosevelt once remarked: 'Henry just hasn't got It.'

"Wallaceland is the mental habitat of Henry Wallace plus a few hundred thousand readers of The New Republic, The Nation and PM. It is a region of perpetual fogs, caused by the warm winds of the liberal Gulf Stream coming in contact with the Soviet glacier. Its natives speak 'Wallese,' a debased provincial dialect.

"Wallese is as rigidly formalized as Mandarin Chinese. The Good people are described by ritualistic adjectives: 'forward-looking,' 'freedom-loving,' 'clear-thinking,' and, of course, 'democratic' and 'progressive.' The Bad people are always 'reactionaries' or 'red-baiters'; there are surprisingly few of them, considering the power they wield, and they are perversely wicked, since their real interests would best be served by the Progressive and Realistic policies favored by the Good people." Dwight McDonald in Politics (March-April, 1947.)

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In Washington, where Congressman Taber is no hero, where all newspapers run "civil service" columns of consolation to the worried job-holder, where news stories about personnel cuts are treated quite differently than in the rest of the nation's press, one must seek the Wall Street Journal (April 14) for the following unfeeling observation: "It is a strange circumstance that government officials who want prices brought down are one of the few purveyors of goods and services who have taken an outright stand against any reduction on their own 'commodity.' They have said quite clearly that it would be unwise to reduce that price and that people who suggest such a thing may have motives other than the best."

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A German lady who had lived in the Russian zone and in Berlin, managed to move to Hamburg in the British zone. Her observations (in a letter) on conditions in her new home suggest that Germany may not find occupation rule by democratic authorities much preferable to that by a totalitarian power: "The atmosphere here [Hamburg] frightens me. When we looked at the Western Zones from Berlin, we had strong hopes that something constructive was being done there, which in turn raised our hopes for the situation in general. Looked at from here, everything that is done appears in a different light. One gets depressed at the realization that, while the leaders of Britain and America seem to understand the situation alright, there is no inclination to act accordingly. The fear that Russia, with her steadiness of purpose, her obstinacy, her brutality, and her drive, will win out after all, now appears only too well founded. . . .Perhaps the Western countries have not yet sufficiently understood that Germany will inevitably fall to the Russians unless reconstruction is now really undertaken with determination. Without that, the civilization of Western Europe will be mortally threatened. Since I have come to Hamburg and have tested the atmosphere here, I have become much more pessimistic than I was in the East. . . ."

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